

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PORT M 01321 180846Z
ACTION PM-05

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 DODE-00 /016 W
-----022283 190437Z /21

R 180700Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3587

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT MORESBY 1321

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION CTF SEVEN FIVE, CTF SEVEN THREE, COMSEVENTHFLT
AND USDAO CANBERRA ON AUGUST 17 REPEATED FOR YOU ACTION/INFO

QUOTE
E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OCLR, PP
SUBJECT: FUEL AVAILABILITY AT MANUS

REF: CTF SEVEN THREE 150624Z AUG 78

1. AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE COOPERATION GROUP (ADCG) CALLED
EMBASSY TO SAY IT HAD BEEN ASKED ABOUT AVAILABILITY OF FUEL
ON SEPT 2 AT MANUS ISLAND FOR THREE US NAVAL VESSELS. UNNAMED
SHIPS WANT TO TAKE ON 143,000, 84,000, AND 84,000 GALS,
RESPECTIVELY.

2. ADCG CONSIDERED IT MOST UNUSUAL THAT SUCH REQUEST CAME
FROM USN THROUGH A THIRD COUNTRY (AUSTRALIA) RATHER THAN
THROUGH AMERICAN EMBASSY, PORT MORESBY. EMBASSY SHARES
THIS POINT OF VIEW. IF SHIPS ARE COMING TO MANUS, EMBASSY
SHOULD BE INFORMED AND DIPLOMATIC CLEARANCE REQUESTED
SOONEST.

3. AS TO SUBSTANCE OF REQUEST (WE DO NOT KNOW WHICH
ADDRESSEE ORIGINATED IT), PNG DEFENCE FORCE SUPPLY TANKS
AT MANUS HOLD MAXIMUM OF 3,000 TONS. AT PRESENT, SUPPLY
ABOUT 1,500 TONS, NOWHERE NEAR ENOUGH TO SUPPLY US NAVAL
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VESSELS. COMMERCIAL OPERATION AT MANUS TOO SMALL TO EVEN
CONSIDER UTILIZING. NORMALLY, BEST BET IN AREA IS LAE,
ON NORTH COAST OF PNG. RABAUL ON EAST NEW BRITAIN IS
ALTERNATIVE BUT DO NOT ADVISE ITS USE FOR ANY SIZEABLE
REFUELING OPERATION AS REFUELING CARRIED OUT THERE BY
JAPANESE WW II TOWED SUBMARINE TANKER WHICH THROWS A
1.5 INCH HOSE UP ON DECK. THIS EXTREMELY SLOW PROCESS,

SLOWED EVEN FURTHER BY FACT TANKER VERY SMALL AND MUST
BE TOWED BACK TO BE REFILLED FREQUENTLY.

4. REFTEL REQUESTED USDAO TO CHECK AVAILABILITY OF
FUEL AT MANUS FOR OCT 18. PARA ONE, ABOVE, APPLIES.
IF US SHIP TO VISIT MANUS ANYWAY, REQUEST EMBASSY BE
NOTIFIED AND CLEARANCE REQUESTED.

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